

Yale Park

YALE AVENUE: PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT

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PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES: Yale Avenue from 1300 East on the west to 1500 East on the east. This district includes houses on the north side of Yale and on the south side including the ravine carrying Red Butte Creek.

MAP:

The proposed Yale Avenue Historic District between 1300 East and 1500 East is a highly cohesive area both visually and architecturally, having a concentration of significant representations of Prairie and Prairie Bungalow styles built between 1913 and approximately 1925. It is historically notable for its connection with real estate developers Edward M. Ashton and Edward M. Jenkins who played a prominent role in the suburban residential growth of Salt Lake City's east side. A number of Yale Avenue home buyers were also historically prominent figures.

From the brow of the east bench at 1300 East, Yale Avenue rises at a moderate incline, the streetscape being generally linear except for a dog-leg as the street follows the contours of a ravine which defines the southern boundary of the district. This gulch, containing Red Butte Creek, provides a naturally wooded backdrop to homes along the south side of Yale Avenue, and serves to isolate the area from the neighboring Normandie Heights subdivision developed more than a decade after Yale Avenue. The proposed district is unified by a consistency of scale, building styles and quality of construction and contains generally uniform lot sizes, set backs and side yards. Lots are well landscaped with numerous mature shade trees. The north side of the street is more architecturally cohesive than the south side, being composed almost exclusively of Prairie bungalows. Of similar size and style, each of these residences nonetheless reflects an individual character in its design.

The majority of Yale Avenue's development occurred during the period of 1913 to 1918, with a number of two story Prairie style houses being built in addition to the bungalows. Later infill is characterized by Period Revival designs, notably the English Cottage and Tudor styles erected during the early 1920s.

The proposed Yale Avenue Historic District comprises a portion of the larger subdivision marketed under the name of Yale Park by the realty firm of Ashton - Jenkins Company, founded in 1905 by Edward M. Ashton and Edward E. Jenkins. Ashton was a son of Edward T. Ashton, an architect and well known contractor and a partner with his brother George S. in the contracting firm of Ashton Brothers. The elder Ashton was active in building up the west side of Salt Lake City and also erected a number of industrial facilities, including power plants for Telluride Power Company. Edward M. Ashton went into business for himself in stocks, bonds and real estate in 1902, after having worked several years as clerk and secretary to banker George M. Cannon. Three years later he joined with Edward E. Jenkins to form what was to develop into one of the largest real estate and mortgage banking firms in the state. Jenkins, also a Salt Lake City native, had previously served as chief clerk with the U. S. Internal Revenue Service. He was involved with a number of concerns in addition to real estate, serving as president of several

mining companies and as a corporate official of Deseret National Bank, Fidelity Trust Company, Modern Furniture Company and Daynes Furniture Company, among other firms. In 1916 he was Republican Party candidate for Governor of the state of Utah.

Ashton and Jenkins introduced Yale Park subdivision to the public in April of 1913. They had purchased, for \$200,000, a large and very desirable tract known as the Gilmer property located south of East High School and between 1100 East and 1500 East Streets. Promoted in newspaper articles and quarter page advertisements, Yale Park was "to be developed as a place for permanent homes and will be jealously guarded and protected against all undesirable conditions . . ." Restrictions assured by Ashton-Jenkins included a minimum lot size of 50 foot frontage and a minimum \$4,000 residence expenditure on Yale Avenue. Only single family houses were permitted, with "no terraces, apartment houses, or flats" to be allowed.

The gulch along the south side of Yale Avenue was touted as offering "canyon life in the city," where home buyers could have "large beautiful trees and pretty nooks" in their own back yards while living within a ten minute street car ride of downtown Salt Lake. Building lots were offered at a bargain price of \$25 per foot for Yale Avenue frontage "worth easily \$100 per foot," according to the developers. Ashton-Jenkins Company also provided and paid for such improvements as sidewalks, curb and gutter, water mains and trees. The laying of sidewalks, curb and gutters along Yale Avenue commenced within several weeks of the opening of the subdivision and was pursued in "all possible haste."

As with other east bench subdivisions, Yale Park attracted relatively well-to-do business and professional people and the developers helped promote this image making public announcements of prominent figures who purchased building sites in the tract. Edward M. Ashton took up residence in the area having a house designed and built at 1352 Yale Avenue by his brother, architect and builder Raymond Ashton. In addition to designing and building a number of Yale Park houses - including his own at 1441 Yale - Raymond Ashton was involved in the construction of numerous institutional and commercial facilities. He operated through a succession of firms including Ashton Brothers, Ashton Improvement Company, Ashton-Parry Company and Ashton and Evans, Architects.

An Ashton and Evans designed English Cottage style house at 1390 Yale Avenue was purchased by Utah Governor Charles R. Mabey, elected to a single term in 1921. Mabey had previously served on the Bountiful City Council, as mayor of that city and as a delegate to the Utah House of Representatives. After leaving the Governor's office, he became president and general manager of Builders' Finance Corporation and president of the Bountiful State Bank. His hobby of rock collecting is said to be reflected

in the garden walls and rock garden of his residence.

A Prairie box residence at 1412 Yale Avenue, constructed in 1923, was bought by David D. Crawford, secretary-treasurer of Crawford Furniture Company and later sold to Wallace F. Bennett who at the time was secretary-treasurer and manager of Bennett Paint and Glass Company. In 1950 Bennett was elected to the U.S. Senate, serving until 1974.

Several attorneys took up residence on Yale Avenue. Athol Rawlins, an authority on stocks and bonds, and son of former U.S. Senator Joseph C. Rawlins, made his home at 1475 Yale from 1916 until moving to Harvard Avenue in 1920. Rawlins' partner, William C. Ray also lived on Yale, at 1408, in a Prairie style house possibly designed by Taylor Woolley who apprenticed to Frank Lloyd Wright in 1909. Ray was a Democratic candidate in 1912 for the U.S. House of Representative and later served as U.S. District Attorney for Utah. Taylor Woolley was also architect of a Prairie style residence built at 1330 Yale for his uncle Albaroni H. Woolley, a manager and director of ZCMI stores. Taylor Woolley was possibly involved with the design of other Yale houses. Law partners John O. Jensen and Archibald M. Cheney established residences in the district. Other residents included corporate officials, businessmen, physicians and dentists.

Home builders involved with the development of Yale Avenue, in addition to the Ashtons, included Samuel Campbell, Bowers Building Company, H.D. Bowman and others. Particularly active in the district was Howard J. McKean who erected at least seven houses along the avenue. He was also active in the Federal Heights area, building a large number of houses in that subdivision. One of the intermountain region's leading builders, McKean was reportedly involved with the construction of 2,500 houses and 500 church, public and industrial buildings. He began his own construction business at age nineteen in 1906 and organized H. J. McKean Company, Inc. in 1919. McKean was associated with former Governor Charles R. Mabey in Builders Finance Corporation. In 1946 he was named chairman of the L.D.S. Church Building Committee, placing him in charge of all construction undertaken by the church.

As home to a number of Salt Lake City's leading citizens of the second decade of this century, with a well unified collection of Prairie and Prairie bungalow residences representative of the period, Yale Avenue possesses outstanding significance both historically and architecturally. As such this portion of the avenue between 1300 East and 1500 East is recommended for consideration as a City Historic District as well as listing on the National Register of Historic Places as an Historic District.

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